

Protecting Your Child Against Serious Diseases

Making Sure Kids Get All Their 'Shots'



Department of Health and Human Services
Food and Drug Administration
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FDA U.S. Food and Drug Administration

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA),
is part of the U.S. Government.
One of the jobs of FDA is to make sure
that all medicines given to children
are safe and effective

Vaccinations are Important

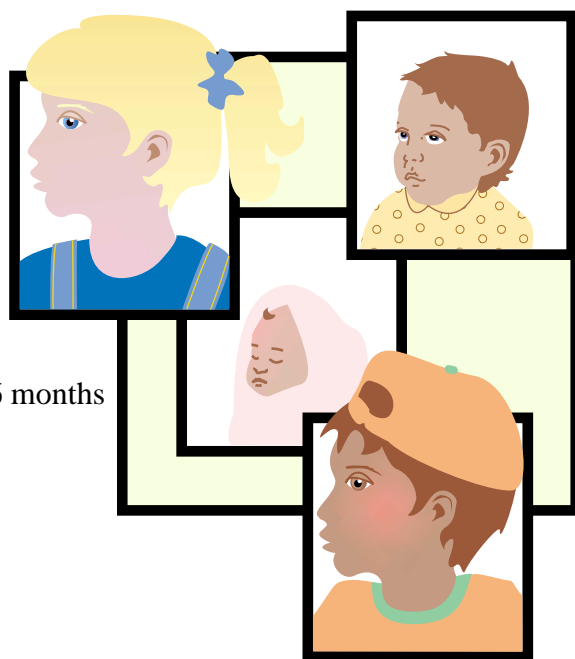
It's important that children get vaccinated—get their “shots”—so they don't get childhood diseases. (Some vaccines aren't given as shots. They're given as drops or syrup.) Your child can be vaccinated at the doctor's office or your local health department. Ask the doctor to give you a list of the shots your child has been given. Keep this list so you'll know if your child needs more shots and for information for schools.



Vaccines are available today to protect your child against:

- diphtheria
- pertussis (whooping cough)
- tetanus
- polio
- measles
- mumps
- German measles (rubella)
- chickenpox (varicella)
- hepatitis B
- HIB (haemophilus influenzae, type B)
- rotavirus (only for babies up to 6 months old)

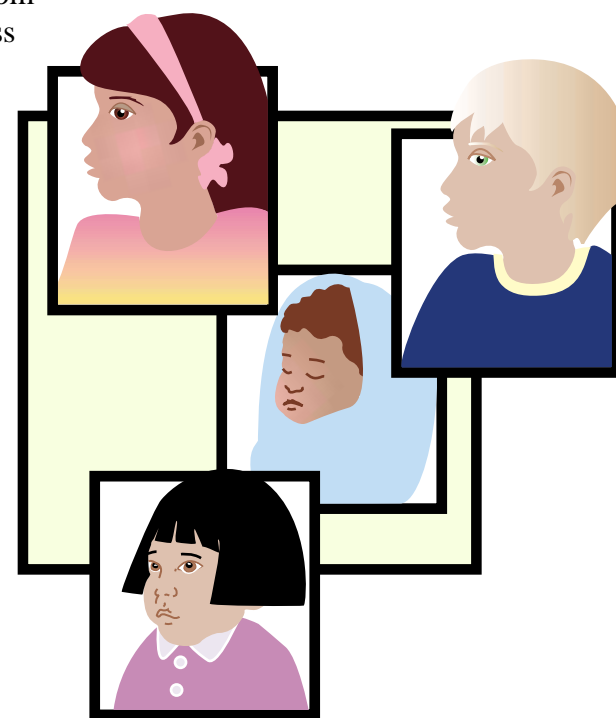
In most of the United States, these vaccinations are required for school or day care. The first shots for most of these illnesses should be given when the child is still a baby. This is important because most of the diseases these vaccines protect your



child against can be serious, even deadly.

Side effects from shots are usually mild and last a short time. Some children get no side effects at all. None of the possible side effects should keep your child from getting shots unless your doctor says otherwise.

Here are the vaccinations your child needs and the recommended age to get them:



DTP

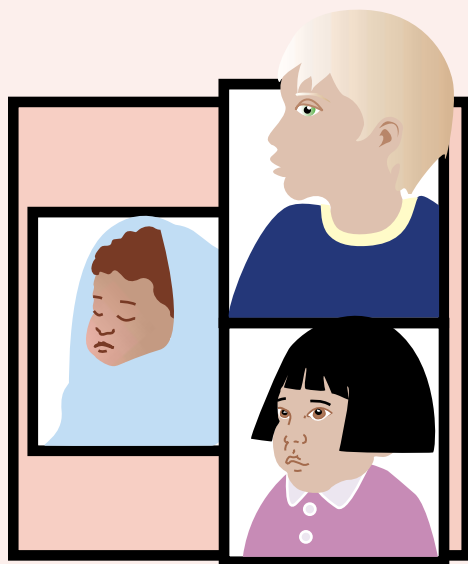
Protects against: diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus. (One shot protects against all three diseases.) Diphtheria is a serious infection of the throat, mouth and nose, which can lead to suffocation, pneumonia, heart failure, and paralysis. If a child catches pertussis, the child gets a bad cough that sounds like a “whoop.” It can be life-threatening, especially in children younger than one. Tetanus is caused by germs in dirt and rusty metal that get into the body through a cut. Tetanus attacks the jaw

muscles first, often causing lock-jaw. It can also affect the muscles used to breathe. It causes death in 3 out of 10 people who get it.

Vaccine given: By shots

Ages to get: 2, 4, and 6 months, and 15-18 months, with a booster at 4 and 6 years. After that, everyone should get a tetanus booster every 10 years throughout life.

Possible side effects: Fever, soreness where shot is given, irritability. In rare cases, the shot can cause very high fever and convulsions.



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Polio

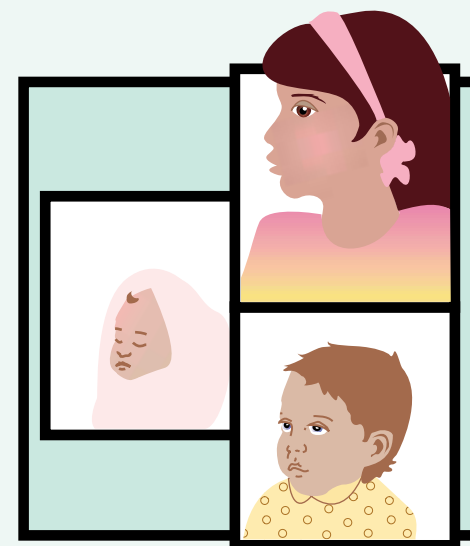
Protects against: polio, a virus that can paralyze and kill.

Vaccine given: By shots or by mouth (in the form of drops). Talk to your doctor to find out what is best for your child.

Ages to get: Usually at 2 and 4 months, at 12-18 months, and at 4-6 years, depending on type of vaccine and other factors.

Possible side effects: The vaccine given by mouth can cause paralysis in a very few cases, usually in people who have diseases that lower

immunity, like AIDS and cancer. The main side effect of the polio shot is soreness where the shot is given.



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MMR

Protects against: Measles, mumps, and rubella (also called German measles). (One shot protects against all three diseases.) Measles is easy to catch and causes a rash, high fever, and cough. Measles can also cause hearing loss, convulsions, brain damage, and even death. Mumps makes the saliva glands under the jaws swell and hurt. It also usually causes fever and headache. It also can have serious complications and is even more painful for teenage boys, whose testicles may swell. Rubella is mild in children but can damage the unborn baby if a woman gets it while she is pregnant.

Vaccine given: By shots
Ages to get: One shot at 15 months and another usually when 4-6 years old. Women who do not know if they are immune to rubella can be tested to see if they are. If they have no immunity they should get the rubella vaccine more than three months before they plan to get pregnant.

Possible side effects: Pain where the shot is given. The shot also can cause a rash, swollen glands, or mild joint pain, but these are rare.

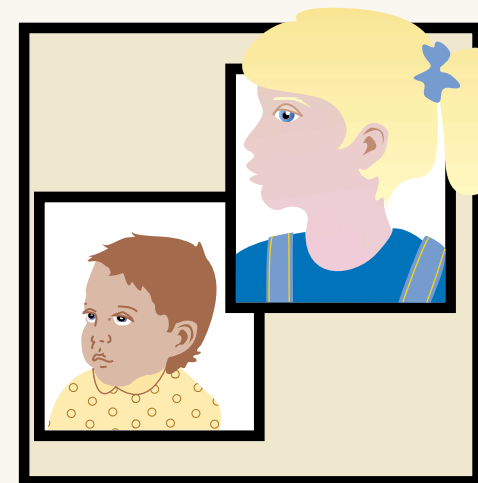


Chickenpox

Protects against: Chickenpox, usually a mild disease but it can have more complications in some children.

Vaccine given: By shots
Ages to get: One shot for children 1-12 years old. For older children and teens and adults who have not had the disease, two shots at least one month apart.

Possible side effects: pain where the shot is given, rash, fever.



Hepatitis B

Protects against: Hepatitis B, a virus that can cause death or long-term liver problems.

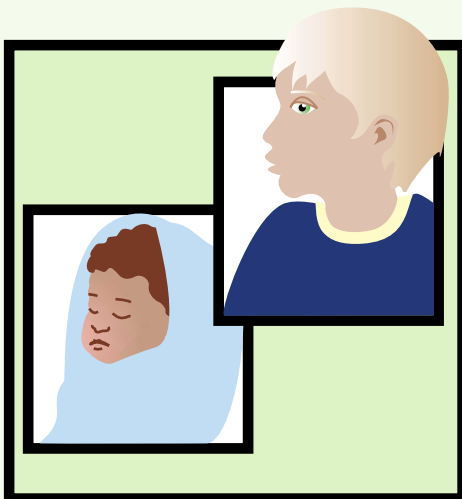
Vaccine given: By shots

Ages to get: For babies, 3 shots before 15 months of age. For older children who didn't get the shot when they were babies, three shots by 11-12 years.

Unvaccinated teenagers should receive the vaccine

whenever possible.

Possible side effect: Soreness where the shot is given.



HIB

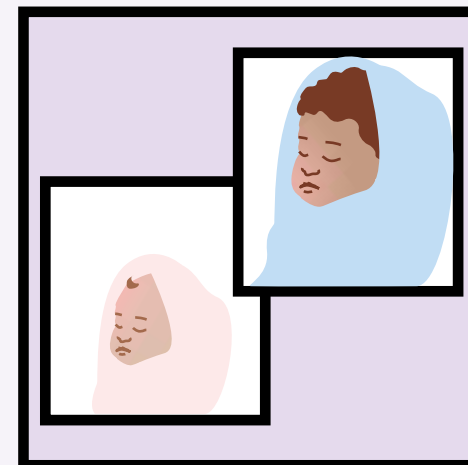
Protects against: Haemophilus influenzae type b, an infection that can seriously harm a child's brain, blood, bones, throat, and the area around the heart.

Vaccine given: By shots

Ages to get: 3 or 4 shots by the time the child is 12 to 18

months old.

Possible side effects: Low fever, soreness where the shot is given.



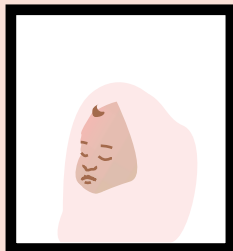
Rotavirus

Protects against: Rotaviral diseases. These diseases are a big cause of vomiting, severe diarrhea, and loss of fluids in infants. They are a major cause of death in infants worldwide, though this is rare in the United States.

Vaccine given: By mouth (in syrup form)

Ages to get: 2, 4, 6 months. Not for children older than 6 months.

Possible side effects: Fever, irritability, decreased appetite.

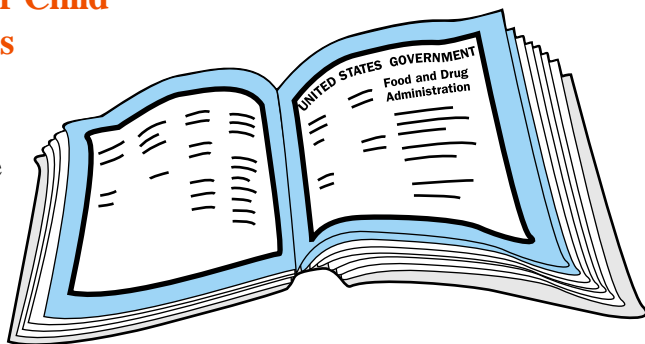


Compensation for Injuries Caused by Vaccines

When there are side effects from childhood vaccinations, they are usually mild. But because there have been rare reports of more serious side effects, in 1986 Congress passed the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act. This law set up a way for people to report serious side effects that result in hospitalization, disability or death, and a way for families to be compensated for injuries. For more information, call 1-800-338-2382, or visit the World Wide Web site at <http://www.fda.gov/cber/vaers.html>.

Do You Have Other Questions About Protecting Your Child Against Serious Diseases?

FDA may have an office near you. Look for their number in the blue pages of the phone book.



You can also contact FDA through its toll-free number, 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332).

Or, on the World Wide Web at www.fda.gov.